

The School Lunch Tray: May 12, 2021

Dear School Sponsors of Child Nutrition Programs:

The School Lunch Tray contains the Connecticut State Department of Education's (CSDE) weekly e-mail notifications for the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) school nutrition programs. This week's topics are listed below.

- Update on Requests for Excess USDA Foods Orders with April 30th Deadline
- USDA DoD Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program for Current School Year
- Monthly Student Attendance Data and Pandemic Electronic Benefits Transfer (P-EBT) Benefits
- CSDE Child Nutrition Unit's School Lunch Tray Table Talk for June 2021
- Now Available: USDA Child Nutrition Database Release 24
- Free USDA Resources for Team Nutrition Schools
- Join Put Local on Your Tray for School Year 2021-22
- Webinar from the Center for Environmental Health (CEH): Ditching Disposables: A Toolkit for Healthier Foodware in K-12 Schools (May 25, 2021)
- Resource Roundup: Disclosure Release Request for Free or Reduced Eligibility Status of Students in the School Nutrition Programs

Please review and share with appropriate staff members. Thank you.



Update on Requests for Excess USDA Foods Orders with April 30th Deadline

The Connecticut Food Distribution Program (FDP) is working to process all requests for USDA Foods. Due to overwhelming response, we will not be able to fulfill all of the orders. This morning, the FDP notified those Recipient Agencies (RAs) that will not be receiving any USDA Foods. If you did **not** receive that e-mail, you will receive all or some of the foods you ordered.

Most orders should be processed through HPC by the end of this week. **Once you receive the receipt** from Sybil Walton or Allison Calhoun-White listing the foods transferred to your district, you may immediately order your cases through HPC net. You do not have to wait until you see them appear on your allocation report. Please make sure to read the receipt carefully as most orders will be only partially filled. As a reminder, HPC will deliver through the end of June. For questions, please contact Allison Calhoun-White at allison.calhoun-white@ct.gov. Thank you for your patience as we manually work through this process.

USDA DoD Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program for Current School Year

HPC will deliver DoD Fresh Fruits and Vegetables through the end of June this year, and will continue to deliver to RAs enrolled in the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) DoD Pilot as of July 1, 2021. If you need additional funds for your DoD Program to finish out this school year, please contact Allison Calhoun-White at allison.calhoun-white@ct.gov. Please provide the name of the district, and the estimated amount of dollars to carry you through the end of the school year.

Monthly Student Attendance Data and Pandemic Electronic Benefits Transfer (P-EBT) Benefits

The CSDE, in collaboration with the Department of Social Services (DSS), is currently implementing the Pandemic Electronic Benefits Transfer (P-EBT) program in response to COVID-19 for the 2020-21 school year. It has come to the attention of the CSDE that some eligible households are not identified as eligible to receive these benefits or received an incorrect benefit level because their students' attendance data has not been accurately reported to the CSDE's Public School Information System (PSIS). The CSDE sent a memo to superintendents on May 11, 2021, [*Monthly Student Attendance Data and Pandemic Electronic Benefits Transfer \(P-EBT\) Benefits*](#), that provides information about two opportunities for districts to submit corrected student attendance data to the CSDE.

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CSDE Child Nutrition Unit's School Lunch Tray Table Talk for June 2021

Join the CSDE Child Nutrition Unit for the June series of the "School Lunch Tray Table Talk" webinars on the dates below.

- Thursday, June 3, 2021 from 2:00 - 3:00 p.m. EST
- Thursday, June 17, 2021 from 2:00 - 3:00 p.m. EST

Table Talk takes a deeper dive into the weekly topics of the School Lunch Tray, highlights the weekly Resource Roundup, and serves as the CSDE's "office hours" for your questions about school nutrition programs. Participants may ask questions about the SLT topics or any other topics. To submit questions in advance, visit https://sdect.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_ezIN3YJJqjkPGND.

Anyone who registered for the April series will automatically be registered for the two Table Talk webinars in May. Registration for the May Table Talk series is available at <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/7940814127249762576>. After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar.

Now Available: USDA Child Nutrition Database Release 24

On May 3, 2021, the USDA released memo [TA 01-2021](#): *Twenty-fourth Release of the Child Nutrition Database (CNDB)*. The Child Nutrition Database, Release 24 (CN24), is now available at <https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/child-nutrition-database>. The CN24 is a required database for nutrient analysis software approved by USDA for use in school meals.

- *Action steps for nutrient analysis software companies:* To maintain USDA approval, software companies must submit their nutrient analysis and certification of compliance software, updated to include CN24, to the USDA Software Evaluation Team by **Thursday, July 1, 2021**. Instructions for submitting software to USDA is being provided directly to USDA-approved software companies. It is also available on the [CNP Approved Nutrition Software PartnerWeb Community](#). New companies seeking approval should contact the USDA Software Evaluation Team at cnptab@usda.gov. The USDA Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) recommends that companies also send a copy of their updated software to their customers by July 1, 2021.
- *Action steps for state agencies, school food authorities (SFAs), and local schools:* After July 1, 2021, state agencies, SFAs, and local schools should verify with their nutrient analysis software company to ensure that the software includes the most current version of the Child Nutrition Database (version CN24).

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Free USDA Resources for Team Nutrition Schools

[Team Nutrition Schools](#) are part of an important network committed to providing healthy meals and environments for program participants. Joining the network is free and easy, and members can request free nutrition resources. During the month of May, enrolled members will receive an email on how to request these resources. Team Nutrition Schools may request free printed copies of the materials below.

- Discover New Foods Decals, which include decals for [Dairy](#), [Fruits](#), [Grains](#), [Proteins](#), and [Vegetables](#);
- Fueling My Life Decals, which include decals for [Active](#), [Busy](#), [Colorful](#), [Creative](#), and [Flavorful](#);
- [Make Today a Try-Day! Stickers](#);
- [MyPlate Nate and Kate School Lunch Stickers](#); and
- [Launch Your Day with Breakfast! Stickers](#).

Join Put Local on Your Tray for School Year 2021-22

It's time to join *Put Local on Your Tray* for school year 2021-22. Districts that commit to *Put Local on Your Tray* join a community that increases the power and potential to make farm to school more accessible and impactful. *Put Local on Your Tray* districts receive:

- free materials (stickers, colorful pencils, posters, activity booklets and more!);
- assistance finding local farms and products; and
- shared resources and tools, news and events to inform and support your efforts.

The sign-up form and *Local Tray Pledge* takes about 10-15 minutes and is designed for food service directors to set goals for increasing local procurement. To learn more and sign up, visit <https://putlocalonyourtray.uconn.edu/sign-up/>.

Let's Fill Up the Map with Districts Taking the 2021-22 Local Tray Pledge!

In 2019 we had over 80 District Sign-up and join Put Local on Your Tray. Let's bring even more Districts together to strengthen Farm to School in Connecticut.

Make a commitment to local and Join out Put Local on Your Tray Farm to School community!

Free materials

Resources, tools, news and events to inform and support

Assistance finding local farms and products

Follow this link to Sign-Up and Learn more
<https://putlocalonyourtray.uconn.edu/sign-up/>
Shape the farm to school program you want to cultivate!

Webinar from the Center for Environmental Health (CEH): Ditching Disposables: A Toolkit for Healthier Foodware in K-12 Schools (May 25, 2021)

On May 25, 2021 at 12:00 p.m. EST, the Center for Environmental Health (CEH) is sponsoring *Ditching Disposables: A Toolkit for Healthier Foodware in K-12 Schools*. This webinar is designed for a broad range of stakeholders interested in transitioning to healthier food service ware in their schools, including school food nutrition staff, district administrators, procurement, sustainability, facilities, and operations staff, teachers, green team members, parents, and students. This workshop may be of interest to schools considering a switch from single-use disposables (such as trays, sporks or straws) to reusables. CEH has developed a comprehensive toolkit on how to make the transition to greener, healthier foodware. This toolkit includes a step-by-step guide on how to flip your school/district from single-use disposables to reusables, a deep-dive into the science around disposable and reusable materials, how to safely incorporate reusables in school reopenings after COVID-19, and much more.

During the webinar, participants will learn about:

- some of the chemicals found in single-use food service ware and how to identify preferable alternatives;
- a school case study and the journey to get reusable in a school cafeteria;
- the benefits of reusables food service ware versus single-use in regards to health and waste impacts; and
- the toolkit, what it does, and how to use it!

What's new:

GreenScreen Certified Standard for food service ware

Speakers:

- Elijah Butterfield, Environmental Justice Fellow, CEH
- Andrea Gottlieb, Rowayton School (CT) Green Team Champion
- Ben Schleifer, EDC Food Program Coordinator, CEH

The presentations will be recorded and followed by a Q&A. Registration is available at https://zoom.us/webinar/register/5416206793208/WN_LiSQmmozTbGIBdhOidXzmA.

Resource Roundup: Disclosure Release Request for Free or Reduced Eligibility Status of Students in the School Nutrition Programs

Local educational agencies (LEAs) often receive requests to disclose information about students' eligibility for free or reduced-price meals through the NSLP and SBP. These requests are typically intended to provide additional benefits to low-income students or provide additional funding to schools with high populations of low-income students.

As a reminder, the USDA restricts LEAs from disclosing sensitive information collected through the Child Nutrition Programs. Section 9(b)(6) of the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act (NSLA) (42 U.S.C. 1758(b)(6)) outlines the restrictions for disclosing and using information obtained from an application for free and reduced price meals, as well as the criminal penalties for improper release of information. These requirements are summarized in [7 CFR 245.6\(a\)\(8\)\(f\)](#).

Generally, LEAs may disclose individual student information only to those persons, including organizations, specifically authorized by the NSLA. The disclosure of individual student eligibility information for purposes other than establishing eligibility for school meals generally is not permitted without parental consent. For additional guidance, review [USDA Memo SP 16-2016](#), [CACFP 06-2016](#) and [SFSP 10-2016](#): *Disclosure Requirements for the Child Nutrition Programs*.

This week's Resource Roundup highlights the CSDE's form, [Disclosure Release Request for Free or Reduced Eligibility Status of Students in the School Nutrition Programs](#). Determining officials for school nutrition programs **must** obtain and approve a disclosure release form **prior** to determining if a student's eligibility information can be released. Approval of requests must be based on the disclosure requirements of the USDA regulations.



For more information, visit the Connecticut State Department of Education's (CSDE) [School Lunch Tray Table Talk](#) webpage, or contact the [school nutrition programs staff](#) in the CSDE's Bureau of Health/Nutrition, Family Services and Adult Education, 450 Columbus Boulevard, Suite 504, Hartford, CT 06103-1841.

This document is available at https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/Training/TableTalk/SLT_05_12_2021.pdf.

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To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the [USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form](#), (AD-3027) found online at: [How to File a Complaint](#), and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

- (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;
- (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or
- (3) email: program.intake@usda.gov.

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